

A Reader's Publication

HOPALONG CASSIDY

THE
WILD
WEST



THE WESTERN
**MADMAN'S
CONVENTION**

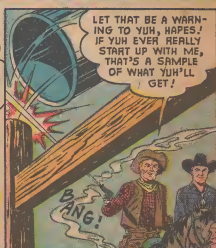
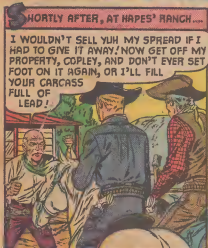


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W. H. Fawcett, Jr., President



HOPALONG CASSIDY is based on the character originated by CLARENCE E. MULFORD

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HOPALONG CASSIDY

PUT THAT GUN AWAY, COPLEY! I HAVE SOME ADVICE FOR THE TWO OF YOU! STOP HURLING THREATS AT EACH OTHER OR SOMEONE'S LIABLE TO GET IN TROUBLE!



COME ALONG, COPLEY! THERE'S NO SENSE IN YOUR STAYING HERE ANY LONGER!



YOU'RE RIGHT, HOPALONG! HE'D NEVER SELL THIS SPREAD TO ME JUST FOR SPITE BECAUSE HE KNOWS I'VE BEEN WANTING TO BUY IT FOR SO LONG! LET'S GO!

MEANWHILE, IN THE REAL ESTATE AGENT'S OFFICE IN TOWN.....

(GULP) IT'S PAYNE-- THE CRITTER I SOLD THAT WORTHLESS LAND TO!



LISTEN, SYKES, THAT RANCH LAND YUH SOLD ME IS BARREN AND FULL OF ROCKS! EITHER GIVE ME A DIFFERENT PIECE OF PROPERTY OR RETURN MY MONEY, YUH CROOK!

IT'S YOUR HARD LUCK IF THE LAND IS NO GOOD! YUH BOUGHT IT!



YUH SWINDLED ME INTO BUYING IT! IT WAS A FRAUD! I'LL TAKE YUH TO COURT AND THEY'LL MAKE YUH GIVE ME BACK MY MONEY!

WHAT MONEY! I HAVEN'T ANY LEFT! I SPENT IT ALL!



THEN I'LL PUT YUH IN JAIL WHAM YUH BELONG!

NO, ON SECOND THOUGHT, I WON'T PUT YUH IN JAIL! THAT WON'T DO ME ANY GOOD! I'LL MAKE LIFE MISERABLE FOR YUH MYSELF--LIKE THIS!



WHA-- OOOOPH!

EVERY TIME I SEE YUH, I'M GOING TO BEAT THE DICKENS OUT OF YUH TILL YUH MAKE GOOD!



OWW!

I READ IN THE PAPER THAT HAPES' RANCH IS FOR SALE FOR LESS MONEY THAN I PAID FOR THAT WORTHLESS ROCK JUNGLE YUH SOLD ME! GET ME HAPES' SPREAD AND I'LL CALL IT EVEN! IF YUH DON'T, I'M GOING TO COME HYAM EVERY DAY AND KNOCK THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF YUH!



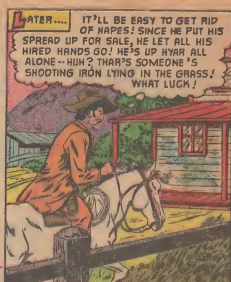
(GROAN)



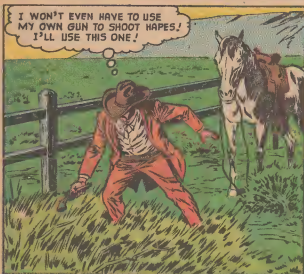
(GROAN) I CAN'T LET HIM BEAT ME UP EVERY DAY! AND I CAN'T GO TO THE SHERIFF BECAUSE I'D WIND UP IN JAIL FOR SWINDLING HIM! I'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING!



THAT'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO—KILL HAPES AND GIVE PAYNE HIS RANCH! AND I KNOW JEST HOW TO DO IT SO NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW ANYTHING WAS WRONG!



LATER.... IT'LL BE EASY TO GET RID OF HAPES! SINCE HE PUT HIS SPREAD UP FOR SALE, HE LET ALL HIS HIRED HANDS GO! HE'S UP HYAR ALL ALONE—HUH? THAT'S SOMEONE'S SHOOTING IRON LYING IN THE GRASS! WHAT LUCK!



I WON'T EVEN HAVE TO USE MY OWN GUN TO SHOOT HAPES! I'LL USE THIS ONE!



A FEW MINUTES AFTER.... I'VE GOT A BUYER FOR YOUR RANCH, HAPES! HE'S WILLING TO PAY YOUR PRICE AND AT SPOT CASH, TOO! HYAR'S THE BILL OF SALE! JEST SIGN YOUR NAME AND IT'S A DEAL!

WAIT A SECOND, SYKES, GIVE ME THE MONEY FIRST!



FIRST YUH'LL GET HOT LEAD!

UGH!

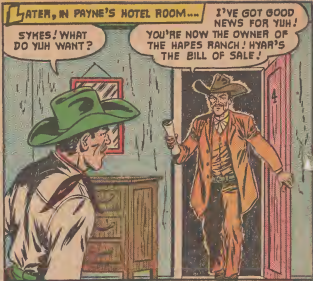
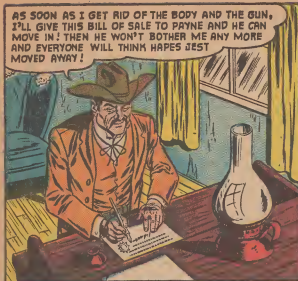


HE'S DEAD! NOW I'LL BURY HIS BODY IN THE BACK AND NO ONE WILL EVEN KNOW HE'S DEAD! THEN I'LL DROP THIS GUN WHAR I FOUND IT!

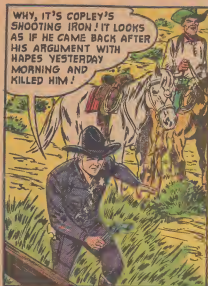


WAIT! HE DIDN'T SIGN THE BILL OF SALE! WELL, THAT'S NOTHING! I'LL SIGN IT MYSELF!

HOPALONG CASSIDY



HOPALONG CASSIDY



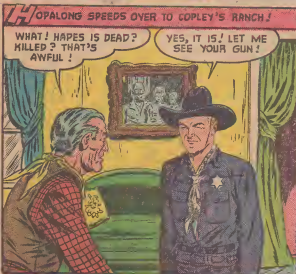
WHY, IT'S COPLEY'S SHOOTING IRON! IT LOOKS AS IF HE CAME BACK AFTER HIS ARGUMENT WITH HAPES YESTERDAY MORNING AND KILLED HIM!



HMMMM, TWO BULLETS ARE GONE! THAT ADDS UP! COPLEY FIRED THE FIRST ONE AT THE TIN CAN IN THE MORNING AND KILLED HAPES WITH THE SECOND ONE LATER!



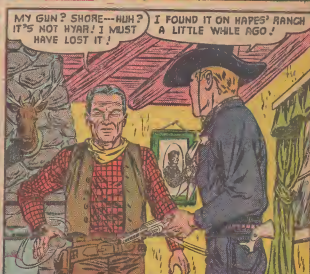
I'M GOING OVER AND SEE COPLEY! THIS MAKES IT LOOK POWERFUL BAD FOR HIM!



HOPALONG SPEEDS OVER TO COPLEY'S RANCH!

WHAT! HAPES IS DEAD? KILLED? THAT'S AWFUL!

YES, IT IS! LET ME SEE YOUR GUN!



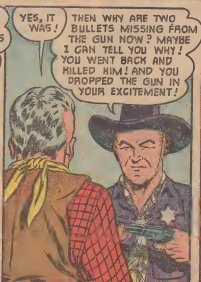
MY GUN? SHORE--HUH? IT'S NOT HYAR! I MUST HAVE LOST IT!

I FOUND IT ON HAPES' RANCH A LITTLE WHILE AGO!



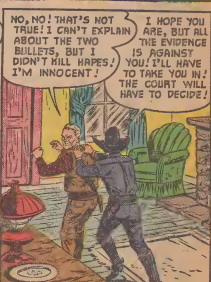
I MUST HAVE DROPPED IT THAR YESTERDAY MORNING WHEN WE WERE THAR TOGETHER! YUH SAW ME SHOOT AT THAT TIN CAN!

YES, YOU TOOK ONE SHOT! WAS YOUR GUN LOADED AT THE TIME?



YES, IT WAS!

THEN WHY ARE TWO BULLETS MISSING FROM THE GUN NOW? MAYBE I CAN TELL YOU WHY! YOU WENT BACK AND KILLED HIM! AND YOU DROPPED THE GUN IN YOUR EXCITEMENT!



NO, NO! THAT'S NOT TRUE! I CAN'T EXPLAIN ABOUT THE TWO BULLETS, BUT I DIDN'T KILL HAPES! I'M INNOCENT!

I HOPE YOU ARE, BUT ALL THE EVIDENCE IS AGAINST YOU! YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE YOUR IN! THE COURT WILL HAVE TO DECIDE!

HOPALONG CASSIDY

LATER, IN SHERIFF HOPALONG'S OFFICE....

IT'S STILL HARD FOR ME TO BELIEVE THAT COPELY KILLED HAPES! I NEVER THOUGHT THEIR FEUDING WOULD LEAD TO... HERE COMES PAYNE! PERHAPS HE WANTS HIS BILL OF SALE BACK!



HOWDY, HOPALONG! I WENT THROUGH HAPES' DESK AND FOUND ALL OF THESE HYAR PAPERS! I FIGURED I'D BRING THEM TO YUH! MAYBE THAR'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT AMONG THEM!



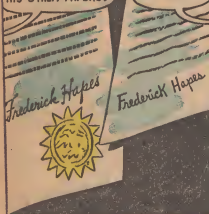
THANKS! I'LL LOOK THROUGH THEM!

HMMM, I THINK THERE IS SOMETHING IMPORTANT HERE! LET ME LOOK AT THAT BILL OF SALE AGAIN!



I WAS RIGHT! HAPES' SIGNATURE ON THE BILL OF SALE ISN'T THE SAME AS HIS SIGNATURE ON HIS OTHER PAPERS!

NOT THE SAME, HOPALONG? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



IT MEANS THAT THIS ISN'T HAPES' SIGNATURE ON THIS BILL OF SALE! SOMEONE ELSE SIGNED IT! DID YOU SAY THAT SYKES HANDED THE WHOLE DEAL FOR YOU?

YES! YUH SEE, HE HAD SOLD ME SOME WORTHLESS PROPERTY AND HE GOT ME HAPES' PLACE TO MAKE GOOD FOR IT!



WHAT! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME THAT BEFORE? HE MUST BE THE GUILTY ONE! HE PROBABLY KILLED HAPES TO GET HIS RANCH SO HE COULD HAND IT OVER TO YOU! I'VE GOT TO GET OVER TO HIS OFFICE RIGHT AWAY!



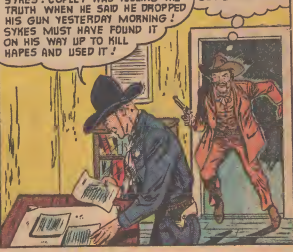
A FEW MINUTES LATER....

SYKES ISN'T HERE! BUT THERE ARE SOME PAPERS ON HIS DESK! I'LL SEE IF HIS WRITING IS THE SAME AS HAPES' FORGED SIGNATURE ON THE BILL OF SALE!

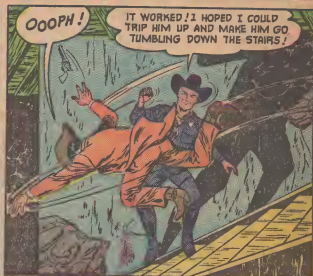
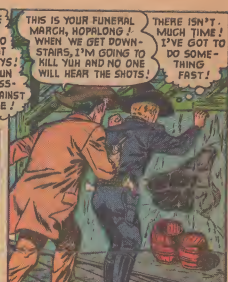


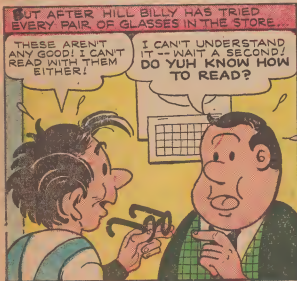
THE HANDWRITING IS THE SAME! THAT CLINCHES THE CASE AGAINST SYKES! COPELY WAS TELLING THE TRUTH WHEN HE SAID HE DROPPED HIS GUN YESTERDAY MORNING! SYKES MUST HAVE FOUND IT ON HIS WAY UP TO KILL HAPES AND USED IT!

HOPALONG! HE'S FIGURED OUT EVERYTHING!



HOPALONG CASSIDY





start your letter with—

Dear Santa I WANT A
ROADMASTER
 the bicycle with **BUMPERS**



When you write to Santa or talk with Mom or Dad about that Christmas bicycle you want, be sure to say "I want a Roadmaster, the bicycle with bumpers." The safest, smartest bicycle you can get. It has everything!

OTHER FEATURES

- Shockmaster coil barrel-spring fork
- Auto-type chrome Gothic fenders
- 100% stronger electronic welded frame
- Searchbeam headlight—not a flashlight
- Brake-operated stoplight for safety



FRONT
BUMPER



REAR
BUMPER



Send this Coupon!

ROADMASTER
 West 117th Street & Berea Road, Cleveland 7, Ohio

Mail this coupon for a colorful folder on beautiful new Roadmaster. Show it to Mom and Dad. Send it to Sam.
 HANFMAN

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

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 Subsidiary of
 AMERICAN MACHINE & FOUNDRY CO.

WHITEY WHISKERS

in KING IDLER

I HEREBY CROWN
WHITEY WHISKERS THE
CHAMPION LAZY MAN
OF THE WEST!

HA, HA, HA!

HO HO!

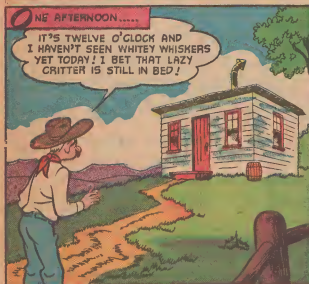
CONK!

BZZZZ!



ONE AFTERNOON.....

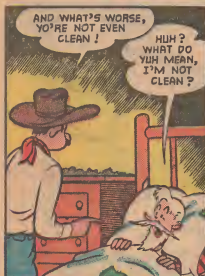
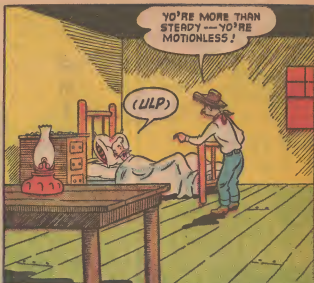
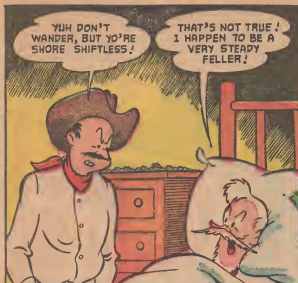
IT'S TWELVE O'CLOCK AND
I HAVEN'T SEEN WHITEY WHISKERS
YET TODAY! I BET THAT LAZY
CRITTER IS STILL IN BED!



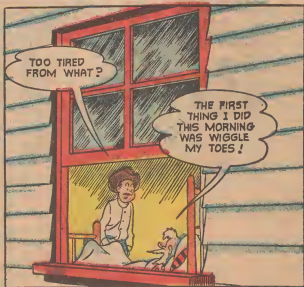
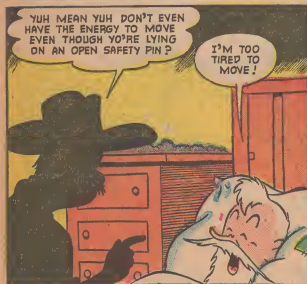
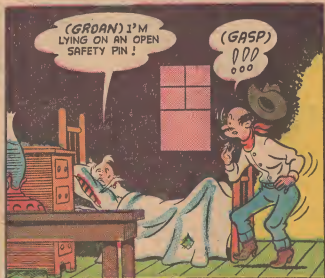
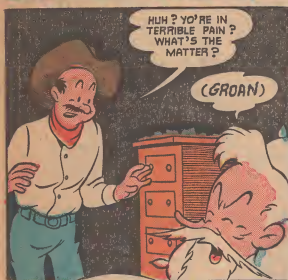
TSM, TSM, I FIGURED
I'D FIND YUH IN BED!

SHORE! I'M NOT
ONE OF THOSE
SHIFTLESS
HOMBRES WHO
IS ALWAYS
WANDERING
AROUND!

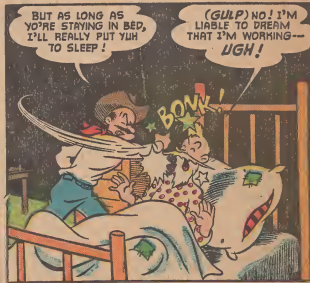
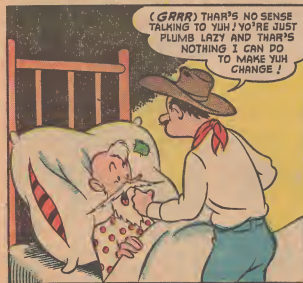




HOPALONG CASSIDY



HOPALONG CASSIDY



HOPALONG CASSIDY

in THE VALLEY MASSACRE!

STARRING
WILLIAM BOYD

WHY, YES, I THINK I CAN HELP YOU PEOPLE! IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A NEW PLACE ON WHICH TO SETTLE NOW THAT YOUR OWN TOWN HAS BEEN FLOODED OVER,

THERE'S A FINE STRETCH OF LAND IN THE VALLEY NEAR THE CROWFEET RESERVATION!

NO, THAT'S TOO NEAR THE REDSKINS! THEY'D PROBABLY KILL US!

THAT'S RIGHT! THOSE INJUNS WOULD BE AFTER OUR SCALPS! OUR LIVES WOULD ALWAYS BE IN DANGER!

SHERIFF
TWIN RIVER
COUNTY
JAIL



THAT'S FOOLISH TALK! THE CROW- FEET INDIANS ARE VERY PEACE- FUL! THERE'S NEVER BEEN ANY TROUBLE WITH THEM! BUT JUST TO PLAY SAFE, I'LL RIDE OVER TO SEE THE CHIEF AND TELL HIM HE'LL BE HAVIN' G- NEIGHBORS SOON!



HOPALONG RIDES OUT TO THE CROWFEET RESERVATION ...

WE NO MIND IF PEOPLE SETTLE IN VALLEY NEAR US, HOPALONG-- --AS LONG AS THEY NO TRY TO TAKE OUR LAND FROM US!

THEY'D NEVER DO THAT, CHIEF! THEY'RE GOOD, HONEST FOLKS JUST LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO LIVE!



THEN WE BE HAPPY TO HAVE THEM AS NEIGHBORS!

FINE! I'LL GO BACK AND TELL THEM THE GOOD NEWS!



HOPALONG RETURNS TO TWIN RIVER ...

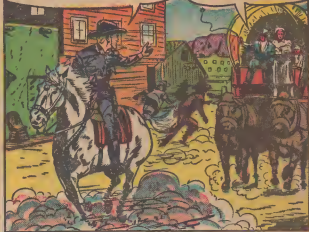
---AND THE CROWFEET INDIANS WILL NEVER BOTHER YOU AS LONG AS YOU DON'T MOLEST THEM OR TRY TO TAKE THEIR LAND AWAY!

WE'D NEVER DO THAT, HOPALONG!



I KNOW! WELL, LET'S GO! I'LL RIDE OUT THERE WITH YOU AND HELP YOU GET SETTLED! YOU HAVE A FINE, NEW LIFE STARTING!

THANKS TO YOU, HOPALONG!



THE FAMED SHERIFF LEADS THE WAY OUT TO THE VALLEY, AND SOON THE SETTLERS BUSY THEMSELVES STAKING OUT THEIR FARMS!

LOOK AT THOSE PEOPLE GO TO WORK! IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THIS VALLEY IS A PROSPEROUS AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITY!



BUT AS TWO OF THE SETTLERS DRIVE THEIR STAKES INTO THE FERTILE GROUND---

HUH? WHAT'S THAT--(GASP) HEY, FLEM! LOOK! A VEIN OF GOLD!

JUMPING TOAD-STOOLS, LARDEN, YOU'RE RIGHT! THE VEIN MUST CUT THROUGH THE WHOLE VALLEY! THAT'S PROBABLY A FORTUNE IN GOLD AROUND HYAR!



YUH SAID IT! LISTEN, WE'VE GOT TO GET THIS WHOLE VALLEY FOR OURSELVES!

HOW? WE CAN'T DRIVE ALL THE OTHER SETTLERS AWAY! AND WE SHORE CAN'T KILL ALL OF THEM EITHER!



NO, BUT WE CAN GET SOMEONE ELSE TO DO THE DIRTY WORK FOR US -- THE INJUNS! ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS RILE THEM UP AND THEY'LL DO THE REST!

I DON'T FOLLOW YUH!



IT'S SIMPLE! TONIGHT WE'LL KIDNAP ONE OF THE REDSKINS! THE REST OF THE TRIBE WILL OPINE THAT WE SETTLERS ARE RESPONSIBLE AND THEY'LL COME HYAR AND MASSACRE EVERYONE EXCEPT US! WE'LL BE HIDING OUT SOMEWHERE!



THEN WITH ALL THE OTHERS DEAD, WE'LL CLAIM THE WHOLE VALLEY! ALL THE GOLD WILL BE OURS!

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, LARDEN! WE'LL KIDNAP THE INJUN TONIGHT!



HOPALONG CASSIDY

THAT NIGHT, THE TWO VILLAINS
CARRY OUT THEIR PLAN ...

WE GOT HIM OUT
AS CLEAN AS A
WHISTLE! NOW
LET'S DRAG
HIM TO THE
WOODS AND
FINISH HIM
OFF!

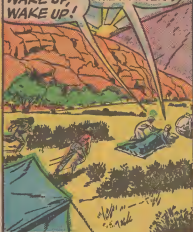
RIGHT! AND IN
THE MORNING
WHEN THE
REDSKINS FIND
HIM MISSING,
THEY'LL GO WILD
AND COME HYAR
AND WIPE EVERY-
ONE OUT!



THE FOLLOWING MORNING ---

HOPALONG!
WAKE UP!
WAKE UP!

HUH---WHAT'S
THE MATTER?



THE INJUNS ARE ON THE WAR-
PATH! LOOK, THEY'RE STARTING
TO RIDE DOWN THE
VALLEY TOWARD US!
THEY'RE AFTER
OUR SCALPS!

IT SURE
DOES LOOK
LIKE THAT!



GET EVERYONE TOGETHER WHILE I GO TRY
TO HEAD THEM OFF! IF THOSE INDIANS
REALLY ARE ON THE RAMPAGE, I'VE GOT TO
STOP THEM SOMEHOW, AND FIND OUT WHAT
IT'S ALL ABOUT!



DAUNTLESSLY, THE FAMED SHERIFF RIDES OUT
TO FACE THE ENRAGED INDIANS BY HIMSELF!

STOP! STOP!
PLEASE!

KILL THIS PALE-
FACE FIRST!
THEN KILL
OTHERS!

YES! WE GET
REVENGE!



STOP! THAT IS GOOD FRIEND!
HOPALONG! NO
HARM HIM!
HE NOT OUR
ENEMY LIKE
OTHERS!

ENEMY? REVENGE? I
DON'T UNDER-
STAND IT!



WHAT HAS
HAPPENED, CHIEF?
WHY DO YOU
CALL THE
SETTLERS YOUR
ENEMY?

DURING
NIGHT THEY
STEAL ONE
OF MY
BRAVES!



BUT WHY
WOULD THEY
WANT TO DO
A TERRIBLE
THING LIKE
THAT?

TO FRIGHTEEN US
SO WE MOVE
AWAY AND
THEY CAN TAKE
OUR LAND FROM
US! BUT IT NO
WORK! WE WIPE
THEM OUT FIRST!



HOPALONG CASSIDY

WAIT, CHIEF! SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE! THE SETTLERS DON'T WANT YOUR LAND, AND I'M SURE THAT THEY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH YOUR MISSING BRAVE! LET ME TRY TO FIND HIM BEFORE ANY LIVES ARE LOST!



I GIVE YOU TILL NOON! IF MISSING BRAVE NO RETURNED BY THEN, IT PROVE SETTLERS KILL HIM TO FRIGHTEN US AWAY! THEN WE COME TO WIPE THEM OUT!



THERE'S NO USE WASTING TIME TALKING! THE ONLY THING TO DO IS TO TRY TO FIND THAT INDIAN BY TWELVE O'CLOCK!

HOPALONG SPEEDS BACK TO THE SETTLERS AND EXPLAINS

--AND UNLESS THE MISSING INDIAN IS RETURNED THEY'RE GOING TO WIPE US OUT! (GULP) WHAT SHOULD WE DO?



WE'VE GOT TO COMB THE WOODS AND SEARCH FOR HIM! HE MIGHT HAVE GONE HUNTING AND GOT HURT! IF WE CAN FIND HIM AND BRING HIM BACK TO HIS TRIBE, EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT!



HA! THEY'LL NEVER RETURN THAT REDSKIN AND THE INDIANS WILL MASSACRE EVERYBODY---BUT WE WON'T BE HYAR!

HOPALONG AND THE SETTLERS SPREAD OUT AND SEARCH THROUGH THE WOODS!

WHAT'S THAT---(GULP) IT'S AN INDIAN! AND HE'S DEAD!



THIS POOR FELLOW WAS SHOT--MURDERED! THERE'S SOME REAL DIRTY WORK GOING ON, BUT I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT!



I TOLD ALL THE SETTLERS TO BE BACK IN AN HOUR! I'VE GOT TO RUSH BACK AND TELL THEM THE BAD NEWS! THIS MEANS THE INDIANS WILL ATTACK ---UNLESS I FIND OUT WHO THE MURDERER IS BEFORE NOON! BUT I'M AFRAID THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME!



SHORTLY AFTER ---

IS EVERYBODY HERE?

YES, I RECKON! WAIT! LARDEN AND FLEM AREN'T HYAR!



HOPALONG CASSIDY

I'D BETTER GET THEM! IT'S IMPORTANT WE ALL ACT TOGETHER AND DECIDE WHAT TO DO! IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THE CROWFEET TRIBE WILL BE SWEEPING DOWN ON US!



HOPALONG RUSHES OVER TO LARDEN AND FLEM'S PLOT OF LAND...

THEY'RE NOT HERE! THAT'S PECULIAR! NOBODY WAS SUPPOSED TO GO OFF! HMMM, I WONDER IF THEY COULD HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE MURDER!



BUT WHAT REASON COULD THEY HAVE HAD? NO, I GUESS THEY JUST RAN AWAY OUT OF FEAR! I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE OTHERS---OOOPH! I RAN INTO A STAKE!



HUH? THERE'S A GOLD VEIN HERE! WELL, THINGS ARE BEGGINING TO MAKE SENSE NOW! THOSE TWO DISCOVERED THE GOLD AND WANTED THE VALLEY FOR THEMSELVES! SO THEY KILLED THE INDIAN TO INCITE THE TRIBE TO MURDER THE OTHERS!



THE SUN IS ALMOST EXACTLY OVERHEAD! THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME TILL NOON! I'VE GOT TO GET TO THE CHIEF BEFORE HE STARTS THE ATTACK! IF ONLY I CAN GET THEM TO LISTEN TO REASON!



WITH ALL THE SPEED POSSIBLE! HOPALONG RUSHES TO THE CROWFEET CHIEF!

CHIEF, YOUR MISSING BRAVE HAS BEEN SHOT! BUT THE WHOLE BAND OF SETTLERS IS NOT TO BLAME! TWO OF THEM DID IT FOR GREED! GIVE ME TIME TO CATCH THEM! THEY WILL PAY FOR THEIR TERRIBLE CRIME! BUT THE OTHERS ARE INNOCENT!



AT EXACTLY NOON---

WIPE THEM ALL OUT! WE GET REVENGE!

KILL ALL PALEFACES!

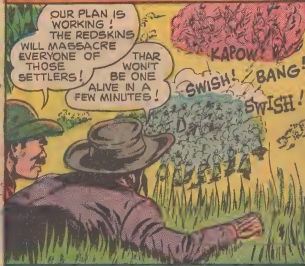


IT LOOKS AS IF HOPALONG'S PLEA HAS FAILED! THE TRIBE IS CARRYING OUT ITS INTENTION TO ANNIHILATE ALL THE INNOCENT SETTLERS!

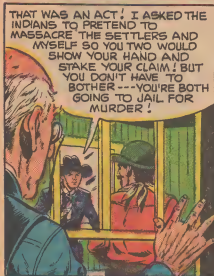
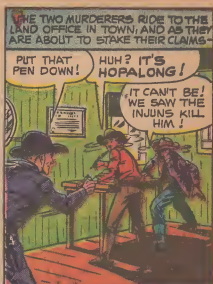
--AND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VALLEY---

OUR PLAN IS WORKING! THE REDSKINS WILL MASSACRE EVERYONE OF THOSE SETTLERS! THAR WON'T BE ONE ALIVE IN A FEW MINUTES!

KAPOW! SWISH! BANG! SWISH!



HOPALONG CASSIDY



HOPALONG CASSIDY

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UP
IN THE
AIR!



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YOU DO!



HOPALONG CASSIDY

FATE FINDS THE WAY

By John C. Adler



FATE is a funny thing. It is entirely unpredictable. It can step in at the moment when you're riding high, and knock you head over heels. It can pick you up from the lowest spot you've ever been in and set you astride the world. Fate's a funny thing. It doesn't seem to care.

And it had been fate which had led Martie Jackson to draw the toughest bronc in the rodeo at Spring Falls. It was good riding, of course, which had kept him astride the plunging, snorting bundle of brown horseflesh long enough to take the money and the day's first prize, but he had been mighty surprised and pleased when a tall, heavy set gray-haired man had approached him after the show and offered him a job.

"Jackson," the man had said, extending a huge hand, "I'm Arnold Zeman, and I own the Circle X ranch. I'm offering you a job. Any man who can handle a horse like you can is going to work for me. You're young and I guess you've got a lot to learn, but we'll teach you. How about it? Want to start tomorrow? Just say the word."

Martie grinned. "That sounds mighty good to me, Mr. Zeman. And you're right. I am young and I reckon I haven't had very much experience, but I sure can learn fast. Where do you want me to report tomorrow? Over at the Circle X?"

"No, son. We're going out on the roundup tomorrow. Meet us at Pilgrim Creek, where the big bend comes in. Be there at nine o'clock sharp." He started to walk away, then turned and called out to Martie, "Nine o'clock sharp, son. My outfit runs on time. We can't wait for you if you're late. Get there before we leave or I'm afraid you've lost your job before you've started. I don't like stragglers."

But next morning at eight fifteen, fate stepped once more into the path of Martie Jackson as he rode along towards Pilgrim

Creek. He had half an hour's journey still to go, and he whistled as he realized that he'd be there before the appointed time. This was his first job for pay, and he was going to make good.

But, at that moment, fate stepped in again and guided the right front foot of Martie Jackson's white-faced cow pony into a gopher hole, plunging the pony forward on its face and pitching Martie out of the saddle onto the hard-baked earth of the Texas rangeland. He landed with a rough jolt.

Young Martie picked himself up, felt the side of his head, and turned toward Pronto. The pony was lying on his side, struggling unsuccessfully to get up. A glance at the right front leg was enough to show that it was badly broken.

A pathetic glance from the large brown eyes and a soft whicker told him that there was nothing else to do but to shoot Pronto, and put him out of his misery. Then he would have to walk to Pilgrim Creek and hope that Mr. Zeman's crowd hadn't left yet. It seemed almost impossible, for he wouldn't get there until after ten o'clock, but there was always a chance. He'd have to take it.

It isn't an easy thing to shoot the cow pony you love, but Martie knew that it had to be done. So he aimed his forty-five carefully, turned his face away, and pulled the trigger. The blast echoed loudly across the plains.

For a moment he remained motionless, reluctant to look towards Pronto. But suddenly he was alert, his eyes straining across the range, down the trail behind him. It seemed to him that he had heard a woman scream.

The shrill sound came again, and he saw in the distance a wagon racing towards him in a cloud of dust, rocking crazily from side to side, drawn by a horse that was surely running away, completely out of control. He could see the reins trailing near the front wheels. On

the front seat were a woman in a sunbonnet and a young boy, locked in each other's arms. He realized they were in great danger.

Martie suddenly became all action. The plunging wagon was close to him now, and he could see the wild eyes of the terrified horse, and the bubbles of white slaver on the foam-flecked mouth. Martie shot ahead, along the edge of the road, and just before the animal reached him, he threw his body forward, grasping the bridle with both hands, just at the side of the head. He braced himself hard, then swung backwards with his full weight.

His arms were nearly wrenched out of their sockets, but the horse came to a slow uneasy halt. The wagon tipped and tilted, but finally righted itself without turning over. Martie soothed and quieted the terrified horse, patting its sweat-covered withers, murmuring gentle words.

"Young man, that was a wonderful thing you just did." He looked towards the voice and saw that the white-faced woman and the young boy were stiff and tense on the wagon seat, their hands locked together. But there was a trembling smile on the woman's face and the boy seemed to be fighting back his tears.

"'Tweren't much, Ma'am," Martie said, very embarrassed. "I reckon anybody else'd have done the same thing if he'd been in my place. You feelin' all right, Ma'am? That was a bad scare you just had." He looked at the boy. "You all right, sonny?"

The boy nodded and looked down, as if ashamed of his tears. The woman gave a long sigh. "Well, I'm feeling better, but I wouldn't want to have this happen every day. What's your name, young man?"

"I'm Martie Jackson, Ma'am. How'd this here horse get to runnin' away? Somethin' scare her?"

The woman leaned forward and patted the horse's broad back. She nodded. "Old Mabel heard a pistol shot and it scared the daylight out of her. She never could stand shooting. That's why we had to make a wagon horse out of her." The woman straightened up in the seat. "Did you hear a pistol shot, Mr. Jackson?"

Martie gave a rather sheepish grin. "Yes'm, that was me." He pointed up the trail, where the cow pony lay on its side. "Pronto stepped

into a gopher hole and broke his leg. I had to shoot him. I shore loved that pony." He scratched the side of his face reflectively, and went on. "Lost a job, too. A man at Spring Falls yesterday offered me a job riding herd if I got to Pilgrim Falls by nine o'clock." He pulled a large watch from the pocket of his jeans. "It's nine o'clock now, so I guess I lost my job. But don't you worry none, Ma'am," he added hastily. "'Tweren't none of your fault and even if it were, it would have been worth it."

The woman glanced at him a long moment. "Pilgrim Falls, eh?" she said. "Yes, that would be impossible even if we ran you there in the wagon. Too bad."

She whispered something to the boy, and he nodded his head enthusiastically. Her eyes were full of humor as she said to Martie, "We think it would be a good idea if you came to work for us at the ranch. My husband is always looking for good men, and I know he'll take you on. Would you like that?" She smiled pleasantly down at him.

Martie scratched the back of his head. "I sure would, ma'am. I certain sure would."

"Well, go get your saddle and bridle off your poor horse and climb aboard the wagon here. You'd better drive old Mabel. There might be another pistol shot."

MARTIE laughed, then sobered as he went over to the spot where Pronto was lying. "Goodbye, old boy," he murmured, as he unbuckled the saddle cinch. "I'm mighty sorry." His eyes stung with the salt of tears, and he brushed them away with the back of his hand. Then he took his saddle and bridle and walked back to where the woman was waiting. He climbed into the driver's seat.

The wagon jogged along at a smart pace with Martie holding the reins. At length he said, "You didn't tell me, ma'am. What's the name of your ranch?"

She looked at Martie, then at her little boy, and smiled. "Tell him, Jimmy."

"It's the Circle X and my Dad is Arnold Zeman. He's out on a roundup now, but he'll be back in a few days. He'll like you an awful lot, Mr. Jackson," the boy added enthusiastically. "I know he'll like you an awful lot."

THE END

HOPALONG CASSIDY

starring
WILLIAM BOYD

in The MADMAN'S CONVENTION

YES, I AM MAD,
HOPALONG! MAD WITH
POWER AND REVENGE! AND
AFTER I KILL YUH, I'LL
KILL EVERY OTHER LAWDOG
IN THE WEST!



HOPALONG CASSIDY HAS RUN INTO MANY STRANGE CASES, BUT NONE STRANGER NOR MORE DANGEROUS THAN WHEN HE COMES FACE TO FACE WITH A MANIAC WHOSE SOLE AMBITION IT IS TO MURDER EVERY SHERIFF IN THE WEST!

DON'T TAKE
ME TO THE
BOOBY HATCH,
DEPUTY! I'M
NOT CRAZY!

OH, NO? ANY
HOMBRE WHO WANTS
TO KILL ALL THE
SHERIFFS IN THE
WEST MUST
BE CRAZY!

BUT I'M PERFECTLY
SANE, I TELL YUH!
LISTEN, LET ME GO
AND I'LL GIVE YUH
THE FIVE THOUSAND
DOLLARS I HAVE IN
MY POCKET!

HUH? WHAR'D
YOU GET FIVE
THOUSAND
DOLLARS? YOU
MUST HAVE
STOLEN IT!
I'D BETTER
TAKE IT!

HA, I KNEW YUH'D
FALL FER MY TRICK!
WELL, HYAR'S WHAT YUH GET
FOR STICKING YOUR NECK
OUT!



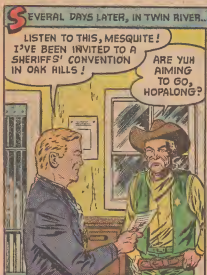
HOPALONG CASSIDY



IT'LL BE EASY FOR ME TO TAKE HIS KEY AND OPEN THESE HANDCUFFS!

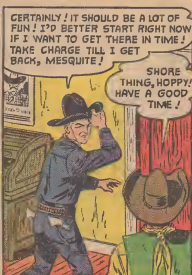


I'M FREE! NOW I CAN CARRY OUT MY PLAN AND KILL ALL THE SHERIFFS IN THE WEST! HA, HA, HA!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, IN TWIN RIVER... LISTEN TO THIS, MESQUITE! I'VE BEEN INVITED TO A SHERIFFS' CONVENTION IN OAK HILLS!

ARE YUH AIMING TO GO HOPALONG?



CERTAINLY! IT SHOULD BE A LOT OF FUN! I'D BETTER START RIGHT NOW IF I WANT TO GET THERE IN TIME! TAKE CHARGE TILL I GET BACK, MESQUITE!

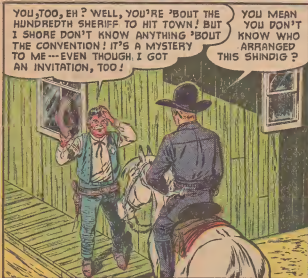
SHORE THING, HOPPY! HAVE A GOOD TIME!



LATE THAT AFTERNOON, HOPALONG ARRIVES IN OAK HILLS AND IS GREETED BY THE LOCAL SHERIFF!

HOPALONG CASSIDY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HYAR IN OAK HILLS?

I CAME FOR THE SHERIFFS' CONVENTION, OF COURSE!



YOU, TOO, EH? WELL, YOU'RE 'BOUT THE HUNDRETH SHERIFF TO HIT TOWN! BUT I SHORE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING 'BOUT THE CONVENTION! IT'S A MYSTERY TO ME---EVEN THOUGH I GOT AN INVITATION, TOO!

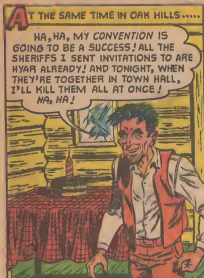
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW WHO ARRANGED THIS SHINDIG?



I SHORE DON'T! ALL I KNOW IS THAT MY INVITATION WAS SIGNED BY THE "CHAIRMAN"--- WHOEVER HE IS!

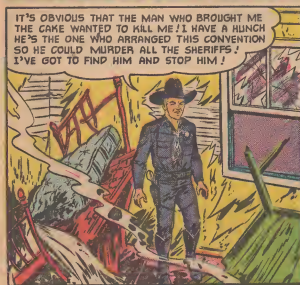
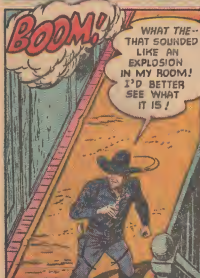
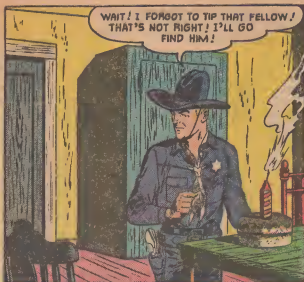
WELL, WE'LL FIND OUT TONIGHT AT TOWN HALL! SEE YOU THERE LATER! I WANT TO GO CHECK IN AT THE HOTEL NOW!

HOPALONG CASSIDY

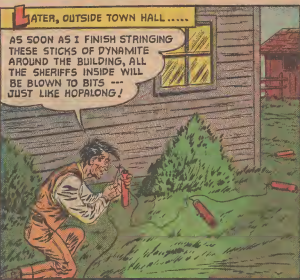
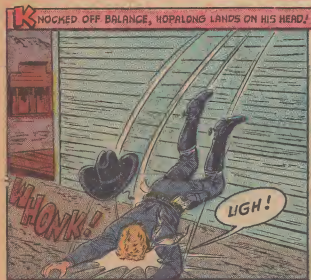
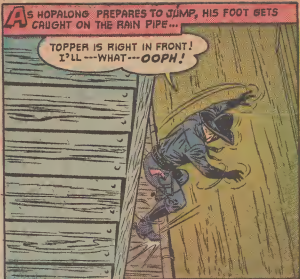


THAT'S ONE SHERIFF I'M AFRAID OF--HOPALONG CASSIDY! I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE ANY CHANCES OF HIS RUINING MY WHOLE PLAN! I'M GOING TO GET RID OF HIM BEFOREHAND!

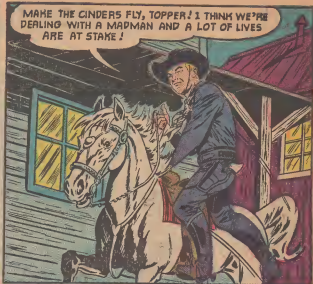




HOPALONG CASSIDY



HOPALONG CASSIDY



WITH THE SPEED OF WIND, TOPPER CARRIES HIS MASTER TO TOWN HALL!

EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE ALL RIGHT SO FAR! BUT I'D BETTER GO INSIDE AND ALERT EVERYONE! MAYBE THAT KILLER SENT OVER SOME MORE OF THOSE EXPLOSIVE CAKES!

OH, OH! LOOK AT THAT! DYNAMITE HAS BEEN STRUNG ALL AROUND THE BUILDING! IT'S LIABLE TO GO OFF ANY SECOND AND KILL ALL THE SHERIFFS INSIDE!



I'M AFRAID THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME TO RUSH IN AND GET THEM ALL OUT! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO—FOLLOW THIS WIRE AND TRY TO STOP THAT MANIAC BEFORE HE GETS OFF THE DYNAMITE!



AT THAT MOMENT.....

I KNEW NO ONE COULD STOP ME FROM CARRYING OUT MY PLAN TO KILL ALL THE SHERIFFS! HA, NOW'S MY MOMENT OF TRIUMPH! I'LL PUSH DOWN THE PLUNGER AND THEY'LL BE DONE FOR!



THERE HE IS! (GULP) HE'S ABOUT TO EXPLODE THE DYNAMITE! I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM FROM PUSHING THE PLUNGER DOWN!



HOPALONG CASSIDY



STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Sec. 233) OF HOPALONG CASSIDY, published monthly at Greenwich, Conn., for October 1, 1951.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Fawcett Publications, Inc., Greenwich, Conn.; Editor, Virginia Provisiero, Corona, L. I.; Managing Editor, Ralph Daigh, Pelham Manor, N. Y.; Business Manager, Gordon Fawcett, Greenwich, Conn.

2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated, and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a

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3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (None.)

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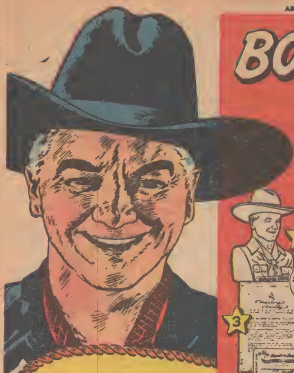
as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the extent of the full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers only.)

GORDON FAWCETT, Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of September, 1951.

(Seal) LILLIAN M. BUSHLEY, (My commission expires April 1, 1953)



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